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LITERARY CORRESPONDENCE.

FRANCE.

IN a former letter I offered a comparison between the classifications of character given by M. M. Bernard Pérez, Ribot, and Paulhan. To-day we have the classification of M. A. FOUILLÉE in a book entitled *Tempérament et caractère selon les individus, les sexes et les races*—an excellent work, in the perusal of which, I hasten to say, I have taken much pleasure. M. Fouillée differs from his predecessors in three points: first, he introduces the idea of evolution into the study of character; secondly, he applies a recent physiological theory to the study of temperament; thirdly, he finds in mind the essential factor of character, and, in a broad sense, distinguishes between character proper, which he places at the top, and moral temperament, *naturel*, which he places at the foundation.

We shall now attempt to sketch the development of his thought and indicate some of the criticisms which his system evokes.

Character, according to M. Fouillée, “is the general direction taken by the will,—that which causes the will to react in a distinctive manner to every class of impressions, motives, and impulses.” But our willed reactions repose on a primitive foundation, and that foundation—the *innermost character* of the individual—is made up of successive strata, race, sex, and lastly, the distinctive temperament of the individual. In brief, acquired character is developed upon a congenital groundwork, upon a groundwork of tendencies which express the general habitude of life of the organism, plus certain traits which express the relative value of this or that particular organ; and this congenital groundwork entire is the *temperament*.

M. Fouillée studies temperament from the point of view of the theory of protoplasm formulated in the work of Geddes and Thomson, *The Evolution of Sex*. These physiologists, as all know, explain the elementary phenomena of life as "constructive changes (anabolism) and destructive changes (catabolism) of living matter." Now these two series of changes may combine differently, so as to produce structures and functions variously specialised in living creatures, both vegetable and animal. According to M. Fouillée, the manner and the proportion of these destructive changes in the functioning of the organism produces temperament, which, in contradistinction to what is usually called constitution, is the dynamic characteristic of the individual. If we were to pass at once to the classification of the temperaments, we should have to consider the reciprocal relations of integration and disintegration in the organism generally and in the nervous system in particular. We should have thus, saving temperaments and wasting temperaments: a *sensitive* type and an *active* type. Each of these is then again subdivided on the same principle, not only by using the dominant direction of the vital operations, but also by recourse to the intensity and rapidity with which they are accomplished. Whence result the sensitive type of prompt reaction (the lively sanguinary) or of intense reaction (nervous), the active type of prompt and intense reaction (choleric) or of a sluggish or non-intense reaction (phlegmatic).

The whole difficulty is to pass correctly from the abstract consideration of anabolic and catabolic processes to the concrete consideration of types. Now M. Fouillée, who is perhaps right as regards the principle of his theory, is here less fortunate, and when he endeavors to deduce traits of visage and of character from nutritive changes, we feel that he is guessing rather than demonstrating, and evinces more ingenuity than exactness. But it will not be difficult to absolve him; the essential thing was to have taken up the right threads of investigation.

So far, however, we have had only types of temperament. Types of character may be obtained, M. Fouillée tells us, by the introduction of the factor of intelligence. Although his predecessors

did not entirely neglect mind in their classifications, he accords to it a far more prominent rôle than they, as being the power which enables us to react and to modify the very expression of our temperament. He does not think that this factor is merely derived and secondary, or superadded,—particularly in man : he discovers a distinct germ of it in that discernment which even the lowest organisms exhibit, and without which the relations of every creature to its external environment would be impossible. The three grand psychical functions in his system are : sensation, emotion, and desire. Their reciprocal relations give us the types of character. What is really and essentially at the basis of character is the predominance, first, of sensibility, of intelligence, or of will ; and secondly, of this or that sensibility, of this or that form of intelligence. The “systematic association of tendencies” on which M. Paulhan takes his stand cannot but depend on the aforementioned relation of the primordial psychical elements, which is alone able to explain it and give body to descriptions.

M. Ribot has distinguished between *suffering* and *acting*. According to M. Fouillée these two categories apply only to temperament. Consequently, he has recourse to intelligence, and obtains three grand categories of character : the *sensitive*, the *intellectual*, and the *voluntary*. Their subdivision into classes gives us, for the first category, sensitive characters having (1) little intelligence and little will, (2) voluntary energy but little intelligence, (3) little will but much intelligence ; for the second category, intellectual characters, we get (1) the exclusively intellectual type, and (2) the intellectual type with lively sensibility ; for the third category, we get voluntary characters having (1) little sensibility and little intelligence (obstinate, opinionated), (2) much sensibility and little intelligence (passionate, violent), (3) much intelligence and little sensibility (cold, energetic characters, a Turenne, a Von Moltke). Classifying them in respect of intellectual objects, we should have egoists and altruists.

M. Fouillée is no doubt right in saying that the germs of intelligence are met with in the first stages of life. Where there is life there is consciousness, memory, and discernment. But when we

speak of intelligence, we understand rather faculties dependent on higher nervous centres, states of reflexion and of full consciousness. Now these states float, so to speak, only on the surface of our mental life. The direction of our will, therefore, does not wholly belong to our intelligence; nor does our soul know of its impulses, nor our conscience contain the sum of all our physiological tendencies. It follows that the three categories of classification proposed by M. Fouillée form a scale and lie one upon another rather than take their places upon the same plane. He admits, even, that classes (1) and (2) of sensitive characters are nearer to the animal life, but I do not see in what respect they are different from the sensitive and active types of M. Ribot. The last-mentioned psychologist appears to me to observe better the principles of good classification, the chief device of which is the subordination of the marks considered.

On the other hand, M. Fouillée recognises that our "sentiments" direct our will, and he also declares that "every sentiment is a state both of intelligence and sensibility." But who is going to deny that our sentiments depend mainly on our sensibility? And if, finally, our "voluntary reaction" is necessarily related to the impressions which provoke it, how can it be denied that our temperament renders us subject to this or that impression, and furnishes our will, so to speak, with its first subject-matter? No, the gap between temperament and character is not so profound as M. Fouillée declares. I must commend his emphasis of the rôle of mind, which is apt to be neglected by modern psychology; but he is wrong in forgetting that the "psychical functions," which are indistinct at the beginning of animal life, never sever their mutual connexions in higher creatures.

It will be impossible for me to discuss the two parts of his book which are devoted to sex and races. He shows himself here the judicious thinker whom our readers have learned to prize, and if there are questions which he does not solve, he has at least the merit of having subjected them to careful scrutiny. Many writers who style themselves philosophers pay no attention to them.

M. G. DE GREEF in *Le transformisme social* gives us, as the subtitle of his work says, "an essay on the progress and regress of societies." In the first part he sets forth in order the beliefs and doctrines relative to the idea of progress and decay; and, imperfect as this rapid review of the philosophies of history is, it can nevertheless be read with interest. In the second part he discusses the facts of retrogression and advancement, and endeavors to extract therefrom their laws. I should not like to say that he has reached exceptionally precise conclusions. His formulæ, whether they deal with commonplace truths or mooted questions, are clothed in a heavy and abstract phraseology.

M. de Greef raises courageously, and that is his strongest point, many important questions—for example, that of the measure of civilisation, or of the characters which enable us to form an estimate of the state of progress or retrogression of a given society. Inspired by the biological conception, he finds progress in the "degree of organisation" of the social body. M. Tarde, on the contrary, will have nothing to do with social organisms, and believes he can classify societies according to the highness of their ideal, and not according to the division or cohesion of their work in respect of that ideal. According to M. Tarde, a social type, an ideal of society, is more perfect the larger the number of divergent "beliefs" and "desires" it harmonises and consolidates, with the result that the agreements of opinions and interests proportionately outweigh the disagreements. But this harmony of beliefs and desires is not revealed, and can only be grasped in the facts ; and are not these facts social data of all orders, economical, juridical, religious, etc.? The psychological method lauded by M. Tarde is forced to have recourse in the opposed method which M. de Greef practises. The one party says: "There can be no harvest where man has not sown ; it is man who is the maker of his own history." The others say: "The harvest is something in itself, and the methods of operation are not indifferent. What is psychological is the individual ; what is social is the collective labor." However that may be, human activity can only be judged by the results which it yields, and these results are

social events, events which have a particular value and are capable of being compared.

Sociologists of the stripe of M. de Greef and M. Durkheim are in danger of invoking mysterious laws or sociological agents,—mere useless entities. Sociologists after the fashion of M. Tarde incur the risk of treating history as a disordered and confused mass of phenomena whose relations are without interest and whose study is without profit. The controversy is far from being ended between the two parties, and occasion will offer itself again for criticism of their curious discussions.

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M. GUSTAVE LE BON gives us, in his *Psychologie des foules*, an interesting work. The growing importance of crowds and assemblies, under the form of public opinion and collective sentiments of all kinds, is beyond doubt one of the striking traits of modern life ; they are becoming here a singular factor, which we must endeavor to comprehend. M. Le Bon studies in this volume more especially the crowds and assemblies which he terms *heterogeneous*, whether unnamed (crowds of the streets, etc.) or named (juries, parliamentary bodies, etc.). He intends to take up later the study of homogeneous crowds (sects, castes, and classes).

The distinguishing characteristics of crowds which it is essential to remember are the following : (1) the unconscious elements which are present in individuals and through which they resemble one another are liberated by the contact of the individuals in the crowd ; (2) every superior individual loses in crowds a portion of his intellectual ascendancy, the mental level is equalised and lowered ; (3) crowds act from sentiment and not from reason ; (4) they are fickle for the reason that they are receptive or subject to suggestions and lack all power of criticism ; (5) they lapse perforce under the leadership of a chief, a vulgar leader, or a man of conviction and strong will-power. Of all these characteristics, which are already more or less well known, the two first seem to me to deserve most attention, and M. Le Bon has not wholly exhausted their contents. His mode of exposition, moreover, is not without its faults. He does not distinguish clearly between what is individual and what

is characteristic of the crowd. He tells us, for example, that the Parisian public was much less startled by the epidemic of influenza which carried off five thousand persons in a few weeks, than it would have been by the fall of the Eiffel Tower, which would have crushed, say only five hundred persons. The reason of this difference is entirely in the individual and in the nature of the event. A man who has reached the age of fifty years has seen, let us say, twenty persons die, relatives and friends. If he had lost them all in one day or in one year, the impression felt would clearly have been different, more voluminous I might say, and that on grounds which are not at all concerned with the psychology of masses. How, moreover, can M. Le Bon assert that the Homeric poems are praised in sheer deference to fashion, but that in reality their perusal is an insufferable bore to every modern reader. I humbly confess that I enjoy these poems more than I do most contemporary novels. But let us leave this little difference and look at the work of our author in its practical and theoretical significance.

M. Le Bon in his enthusiasm for his subject is on the verge of seeking in the psychology of crowds the key to history, which M. Tarde finds in imitation. There are numerous other keys, and together they make a pretty ring. The truth is, that social phenomena are so complex that there is profit in considering them from several points of view. We then catch gleams of details and even of broader features which escape the eye on a glance at the whole. If the psychology of crowds explains many things, on the other hand it teaches us nothing regarding the reason of their succession ; it reveals one of the mechanisms of human history rather than its laws, and as a matter of fact M. Le Bon stops at race as an indecipherable factor, a mysterious enigma. He is sensible that psychological theories are never more than an end of the thread of Ariadne and that we do not possess the plan of the mythological labyrinth.

As to the practical conclusions which he draws from his studies, some are eminently discreet, but there are others which it is more difficult to justify. In some cases he sees things from one side only ; often he simplifies problems too much in solving them.

The elasticity of the notion of race does not allow of the rigid deductions to which it sometimes leads him. M. Le Bon finally, lays much stress on the elusive and unreal character of the ideas which have led the world ; but he should inquire whether these illusions have not some solid basis. Human happenings alone cannot be considered devoid of meaning in the totality of natural phenomena where on all hands we find order and regularity.

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M. Le Bon has observed in the book which I have just noticed that if socialism is so powerful to-day it is because it is the only illusion which is still alive. Despite all scientific demonstrations, he says, it continues to grow. The crowd turns from proofs which are disagreeable to it and prefers to deify error, if error is attractive. The Preface of the book of M. R. GAROFALO, *La superstition socialiste*, admirably illustrates the foregoing observation, as the reader will remark on perusing the imaginary conversation with the Marxian fanatics. Unfortunately the work of the eminent Italian magistrate is, by the very force of the illusion inherent in the sophisms which he combats, in danger of remaining unfruitful as many other learned works have done. M. Garofalo, it is true, addresses his arguments principally to persons in the middle and higher classes, who imagine that socialism stands for truth and progress. The danger is a real one which comes from the support which the socialists' doctrines have drawn from the authoritative ranks of society. There are reasons why socialism is growing, but it is not an organising power : it is in the eyes of the philosopher one of those forms under which the active dissolution of our social systems disappears. The remedy will be found not in refutations of the socialistic error, but in the correction of the conditions which give rise to it and render it desirable.

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M. PAUL BOILLEY in *Les trois socialismes—anarchisme, collectivisme, reformisme*, offers a criticism in this last direction. I could not discuss his book here without going outside the limits of our studies and shall confine myself to recommending its perusal to the reader. A second French edition of the great work of M. C. LOM-

BROSO, *L'homme criminel* has just appeared. It has been considerably enlarged and will find a place in all libraries. Both the second volume and the atlas are completely new. The additions embrace interesting monographs on the criminal from passion, the criminaloid, and the insane criminal, original studies on fetishism in love, etc.

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M. HYACINTHE LOYSON (Père Hyacinthe) publishes two simple lectures delivered in Paris under the title of *France et Algérie, Christianisme et Islamisme*.¹ He studies here first, the law, and secondly, the religion of Islam. His practical conclusions have special importance regarding the relations of France to its Musselman subjects. His theoretical conclusions will be of more interest to American readers. M. Loysen, who is a sincere Christian, declares the inferiority of Islam as compared with Christianity, but he does it with full justice, and strives to emphasise the bonds which unite the religion of Jesus with that of Mohammed, endeavoring to join the souls of their adherents in one single truth. I think, and have remarked it elsewhere, that the inferiority of Islam is mainly that of the races to which it is addressed. Christianity has had the benefit of the rich heritage of Greece and Rome without which it would never have attained its high destinies. No one will deny that there are several Christianities, and it cannot be affirmed of them that they are always and everywhere superior to Islam.

M. Loysen could not treat, much less exhaust, such questions in these simple lectures. But the sincere effort which he makes towards the reconciliation of souls and of races is an act marking an epoch and will not fail of its results: the service of the eloquent preacher will be remembered in the future by all serious men.

LUCIEN ARRÉAT.

PARIS.

¹Dentu, publisher. The other works mentioned are published by Félix Alcan.